

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 CAIRO 08084 131737Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----090677 131752Z /41

O 131722Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6609
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

S E C R E T CAIRO 08084

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS IS EG
SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN REACTION TO TERRORIST INCIDENT IN
ISRAEL

REF: (A) STATE 63489, (B) CAIRO 8046

1. MET WITH FONMIN KAMEL TODAY TO URGE GOE FIND SOME WAY TO DISSOCIATE ITSELF FROM RECENT TERRORIST ATTACK IN ISRAEL AND CONDEMN IT IN CONTEXT EGYPTIAN GENERAL POLICY OPPOSING INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM. KAMEL'S CHEF DE CABINET, AHMED MAHER, WAS ALSO PRESENT.
2. TOLD HIM WE ARE SURE GOE SHARES OUR DESIRE TO WORK TO MINIMIZE ADVERSE FALLOUT RESULTING FROM INCIDENT AND LIKELY ISRAELI RETALIATORY ACTION. ISRAELI AND U.S. PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF ATTITUDE OF MODERATE ARAB GOVERNMENTS, ESPECIALLY EGYPT, TOWARD OUTRAGE WILL BE IMPORTANT IN SHAPING PUBLIC OPINION IN BOTH COUNTRIES. I RECALLED ISRAEL HAD MADE A STATEMENT CONDEMNING TERRORIST ATTACK

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 CAIRO 08084 131737Z

AGAINST EGYPTIAN IN CYPRUS AND EXPRESSED HOPE GOE WOULD BE WILLING TO ISSUE SIMILAR STATEMENT CONDEMNING ATTACK IN ISRAEL. EMPHASIZED WAYS MUST BE FOUND TO PREVENT RECENT INCIDENT FROM DAMAGING PEACE PROCESS, WHICH WAS CLEARLY ITS PURPOSE. WE RECOGNIZE PROBLEM FOR GOE, BUT HOPE IT WILL SEE ITS WAY CLEAR TO ISSUING A STRONG CONDEMNATORY STATEMENT.

3. KAMEL HAD A MESSAGE FROM GHORBAL REPORTING LATTER'S PERTINENT TALK WITH ATHERTON. KAMEL SAID HE PERSONALLY DEPLORES THE INCIDENT AND WISHES IT HAD NEVER HAPPENED. HE AGREED THAT IT IS A REJECTIONIST EFFORT TO SABOTAGE THE ME PEACE PROCESS. HE DID NOT SEE, HOWEVER, HOW GOE CAN ISSUE A FORMAL STATEMENT CONDEMNING IT. (THE MATTER OF DISSOCIATING GOE FROM INCIDENT DOES NOT ARISE, KAMEL INSISTED, SINCE EGYPT WAS CLEARLY NOT IN ANY WAY ASSOCIATED WITH IT.) HE AGREED THAT GOE OPPOSES INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM. BUT SATURDAY'S INCIDENT, AS HE SAW IT, COULD NOT PROPERLY BE LIKENED TO TERRORIST ACTIVITIES SUCH AS HIGH-JACKING. IT WAS AN ACT BY DESPERATE MEN, WHO HAVE BEEN DISPOSSESSED OF THEIR RIGHTS BY THE ISRAELIS. THE BASIC CAUSE FOR THIS TYPE OF INCIDENT, KAMEL CONTENDED, IS ISRAEL'S CONTINUED NEGATION OF LEGITIMATE PALESTINIAN RIGHTS. AUSTRIAN FOREIGN MINISTER HAD ISSUED A STATEMENT MAKING THIS POINT. SO HAD THE SAUDIS.

4. AS WE KNEW, GOE HAD ALREADY ISSUED A STATEMENT YESTERDAY (REF B), THE THRUST OF WHICH WAS ALSO THAT INCIDENTS OF THIS TYPE ARE BOUND TO CONTINUE SO LONG AS LEGITIMATE PALESTINIAN RIGHTS ARE IGNORED. HE THOUGHT THIS IS AS FAR AS GOE CAN GO IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES. PRESIDENT SADAT, HE CLAIMED, HAD APPROVED THAT STATEMENT. HE NOTED THAT BBC, IN REPORTING IT LAST EVENING, HAD DESCRIBED IT AS A
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 CAIRO 08084 131737Z

CONDEMNATION OF THE TERRORIST ACTION.

5. GOE, KAMEL LAMENTED, IS HIGHLY VULNERABLE IN ARAB WORLD SINCE SADAT'S TRIP TO JERUSALEM. IT IS NOT SIMPLY A MATTER OF THE REJECTIONISTS, BUT RELATIONS ARE STRAINED EVEN WITH FRIENDS SUCH AS SAUDI ARABIA. GOE CANNOT ISSUE STATEMENT GOING BEYOND WHAT THE SAUDIS AND OTHERS HAVE SAID. REJECTIONISTS ARE HOPING GOE WILL DO SO AND WILL POUNCE UPON IT FURTHER TO PILLORY SADAT. HE HOPED USG WILL UNDERSTAND EGYPTIAN POSITION. I URGED HIM TO RECONSIDER AND ISSUE SOME KIND OF A CONDEMNATORY STATEMENT, BUT KAMEL SAID GOE CANNOT GO BEYOND WHAT IT HAS ALREADY SAID.

6. KAMEL ASSUMES ISRAEL WILL RETALIATE. HE THOUGHT THAT PERHAPS AFTER ISRAELI RETALIATION GOE CAN ISSUE A STATEMENT CONDEMNING TERRORIST RAID AND ISRAELI REPRISAL. HE HOPED USG WILL ALSO CONDEMN LIKELY ISRAELI REPRISAL WHEN IT OCCURS.

7. COMMENT: AS DEPT AWARE, KAMEL IS CONCERNED THAT GOE HAS ALREADY STUCK ITS NECK OUT IN SADAT'S PEACE OVERTURE TO BEGIN AND HAS GOTTEN NOTHING IN RETURN. WHILE HE

GENUINELY DEPLORES THE INCIDENT, AND RECOGNIZES ITS PURPOSE, HE FEARS THAT AN OUTRIGHT GOE CONDEMNATION SUCH AS WE SUGGEST WILL FURTHER ISOLATE EGYPT. EILTS

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, TERRORISTS, UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978CAIRO08084
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780111-0821
Format: TEL
From: CAIRO
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780377/aaaacmzi.tel
Line Count: 119
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 455774c8-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 78 STATE 63489, 78 CAIRO 8046
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3356197
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EGYPTIAN REACTION TO TERRORIST INCIDENT IN ISRAEL
TAGS: PINS, IS, EG
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/455774c8-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014